Amendments to the Examiner's Amendment to the Claims

The listing of claims below will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. The changes to dependent claim 28 relative to its immediate prior version (i.e., the version as amended by the Examiner's Amendment dated September 28, 2009) are shown using strikethrough to identify deleted material and underlining to identify added material.

Listing of Claims:

1-25. (canceled)

26. (previously presented) A sample analyzer for analyzing a sample, comprising:

a sample preparation unit comprising a pipette, and configured for preparing a diluted sample for measurement by diluting the sample supplied by the pipette;

a solution container holder for holding a solution container comprising an acidic solution used for the diluting of the sample by the sample preparation unit and for washing the pipette;

a detection unit for obtaining a detection signal from the diluted sample prepared by the sample preparation unit;

a controller in communication with the detection unit and the sample preparation unit and configured for obtaining an analysis result from the detection signal obtained by the detection unit; and

a washing solution supplier for supplying a washing solution having a pH that is higher than a pH of the acidic solution;

wherein the sample preparation unit prepares the diluted sample by diluting the sample supplied by the pipette with the acidic solution suctioned from the solution container, and washes inside of the pipette by suctioning the acidic solution into the pipette from the solution container when the analysis result is equal to or greater than a predetermined value; and

wherein the washing solution supplier washes outside of the pipette by supplying the washing solution.

27. (canceled)

28. (currently amended) The sample analyzer of claim ~~28~~ 26, wherein the sample preparation unit washes the pipette by supplying the washing solution into the pipette from the washing solution supplier and then, when the analysis result is equal to or greater than the predetermined value, further washes the pipette by suctioning the acidic solution into the pipette from the solution container.

29. (previously presented) The sample analyzer of claim 26, wherein the sample preparation unit washes the pipette by suctioning the acidic solution into the pipette from the solution container and discharging the suctioned acidic solution from the pipette.

30. (previously presented) The sample analyzer of claim 26, wherein the sample preparation unit washes the pipette by holding the suctioned acidic solution within the pipette for a predetermined time.

31. (canceled)

32. (previously presented) The sample analyzer of claim 26, wherein the controller calculates number of bacteria contained in the sample.

33. (previously presented) The sample analyzer of claim 26, wherein the acidic solution has a pH of less than 5.0.

34. (previously presented) The sample analyzer of claim 26, wherein the acidic solution has a pH of between 2 and 3.

35. (previously presented) A bacteria analyzer for analyzing a bacterium in a sample, comprising:

a sample preparation unit comprising a pipette and configured for preparing an assay sample for measurement from the sample supplied by the pipette;

a solution container holder for holding a solution container comprising an acidic solution used for washing the pipette;

a detection unit for obtaining a detection signal relating to a bacterium from the assay sample prepared by the sample preparation unit;

a controller in communication with the detection unit and the sample preparation unit and configured for obtaining an analysis result relating to a bacterium in the sample from the detection signal obtained by the detection unit; and

a washing solution supplier for supplying a washing solution having a pH that is higher than a pH of the acidic solution;

wherein the sample preparation unit washes inside of the pipette by suctioning the acidic solution into the pipette from the solution container when the analysis result is equal to or greater than a predetermined value; and

wherein the washing solution supplier washes outside of the pipette by supplying the washing solution.

36. (previously presented) The bacteria analyzer of claim 35, wherein the sample preparation unit prepares the assay sample by diluting the sample with a dilution fluid to form a diluted sample, and staining the diluted sample with a stain.

37. (previously presented) The bacteria analyzer of claim 36, wherein the acidic solution is used as the dilution fluid.

38. (previously presented) The bacteria analyzer of claim 36, wherein the dilution fluid is used for destroying a membrane of the bacterium for effective staining of the bacterium.

39. (previously presented) The bacteria analyzer of claim 35, wherein the sample comprises urine.

40. (previously presented) A urine analyzer for analyzing a urine sample, comprising:

a sample preparation unit comprising a pipette and configured for preparing a diluted urine sample for measurement by diluting the urine sample supplied by the pipette;

a solution container holder for holding a solution container comprising an acidic solution used for the diluting of the urine sample by the sample preparation unit and for washing the pipette;

a detection unit for obtaining a detection signal from the diluted urine sample prepared by the sample preparation unit;

a controller in communication with the detection unit and the sample preparation unit and configured for obtaining an analysis result from the detection signal obtained by the detection unit; and

a washing solution supplier for supplying a washing solution having a pH that is higher than a pH of the acidic solution;

wherein the sample preparation unit prepares the diluted urine sample by diluting the urine sample supplied by the pipette with the acidic solution suctioned from the solution container, and washes inside of the pipette by suctioning the acidic solution into the pipette from the solution container when the analysis result is equal to or greater than a predetermined value; and

wherein the washing solution supplier washes outside of the pipette by supplying the washing solution.

41-42. (canceled)

43. (previously presented) The sample analyzer of claim 26, further comprising a sheath fluid supplier for supplying a sheath fluid to the detection unit to form a sheath flow.

44-45. (canceled)

46. (previously presented) A sample analyzer for analyzing a sample, comprising:

a sample preparation unit comprising a pipette and configured for preparing a diluted sample for measurement by diluting the sample supplied by the pipette;

a solution container holder;

a solution container comprising an acidic solution used for the diluting of the sample by the sample preparation unit and for washing the pipette;

a detection unit for obtaining a detection signal from the diluted sample prepared by the sample preparation unit;

a controller in communication with the detection unit and the sample preparation unit and configured for obtaining an analysis result from the detection signal obtained by the detection unit; and

a washing solution supplier for supplying a washing solution having a pH that is higher than a pH of the acidic solution;

wherein the sample preparation unit prepares the diluted sample by diluting the sample supplied by the pipette with the acidic solution suctioned from the solution container, and washes inside of the pipette by suctioning the acidic solution into the pipette from the solution container when the analysis result is equal to or greater than a predetermined value; and

wherein the washing solution supplier washes outside of the pipette by supplying the washing solution.